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DULVERTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and the

SANITARY INSPECTOR

YEAR 1955



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TO THE  
CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS  
OF THE  
DULVERTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Report on the health of the Dulverton Rural District during the year 1955.

The headings are those formulated by the Ministry of Health.



Chairman : Col. E.R.Clayton, Northmoor, Dulverton.

Vice Chairman : The Hon.Mrs.M.G.Herbert, Pixton, Dulverton.

Mr . F . King .	Brig: A . E . Snow .
Mr . B . A . Hobhouse .	Mr . H . S . Holman .
Mrs . T . Yandle .	Mr . J . Hayes .
Mr . A . B . Smallridge .	Mr . F . T . Barrow .
Mr . I . J . Kemp .	Mr . W . J . T . Marke .
Mr . W . G . Bryant .	Mr . J . Richards .
Maj . Gen . H . J . Hayman Joyce .	Mr . D . C . Clapp .
Mr . C . Sweetland .	Capt . E . A . Gibbs R . N . (Retd) .
Mrs . H . B . Bovill .	Miss B . K . Abbot .
Mr . F . Partridge .	

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Clerk to the Council :- R.W.Halse Esqr., Solicitor.

Public Health Officers for the District :-

Dr . G . Nicholson, M.D ., D.P.H ., F.R.C.S ., E (Part time M.O.H .) .

District M.O . and Public Vaccinator : Dr . B.W . McKinney .

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector : Mr . H . A . Jewell, A . R . San . Inst ., M . Public Health Engineers .

Assistant Sanitary Inspector : Mr . R . J . Organ, Cert . R . S . Inst .

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STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area in acres.....	78,159
Population 1953 (estimated) .....	4,420
Inhabited Houses.....	1,376
Number of inhabited houses as per rate books.....	1,396
Number of families or separate occupiers.....	1,396
Sum produced by 1d rate.....	£73

SPECIAL CONDITIONS.

Good. The vast majority of the inhabitants are engaged in agricultural pursuits and appear to be exceptionally healthy in consequence.

EXTRACT FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1955

	TOTAL	M.	F.	
Live Births (Legitimate).....	61	37	24	) Birth
Live Births (Illegitimate).....	3	1	2	) Rate = 13.1
Deaths.....	48	26	22	) Death
Still Births.....	3	3		) Rate = 10.8

Corrected Death Rate = 9.6  
Corrected Birth Rate = 15.0

DEATH RATE OF INFANTS UNDER AGE OF ONE YEAR

	TOTAL	M.	F.
Legitimate.....	3	-	3.
Illegitimate.....	-	-	-
Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age....	3	-	3.
Deaths from Measles.....	-	-	-
Deaths from Whooping Cough.....	-	-	-
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years).....	-	-	-
Deaths from Diarrhoea (infants under 4 wks) ..	-	-	-
Number of women dying of or in consequence of childbirth.....		Nil	

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

There are 11 certified T.T. dairies in the district and the standard of the samples obtained from them have been satisfactory.

Samples for tubercle bacilli, were taken at regular intervals from different parts of the district and all were found free from infection.

The examination of milk for tubercle bacilli is carried out at the County Laboratory.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER  
DISEASES

During 1955 Dulverton District had cases of Notifiable Disease other than Tuberculosis.

VACCINATIONS

Vaccinations carried out by the M.O.H. during 1955 - Nil.



NOTIFIABLE DISEASE (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS)

	<u>Total Cases Notified</u>	<u>Cases admitted to Hospital.</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Small Pox.....	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever.....	-	-	-
Diphtheria.....	-	-	-
Measles.....	11	-	-
Puerperal pyrexia.....	-	-	-
Whooping Cough.....	10	-	-
Pneumonia.....	4	-	-
Other Diseases notifiable locally :-			
Chicken Pox.....	-	-	-
Erysipelas.....	2	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis.....	-	-	-
Dysentery.....	-	-	-
Anthrax.....	-	-	-

Deaths from Cancer: Stomach 3, Breast 2, other regions 2. Total 7.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

No action was taken.

HOUSING

In the past year 21 new houses have been completed and work on further houses proceeds at a satisfactory rate.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA

1. Nursing in the Home.
  - (a) Nursing is provided by the Somerset District Nursing Association. There is no co-ordination with the Sanitary Authority.
  - (b) Home Helps.  
All home help services are controlled by the Somerset County Council. It operates in the district giving attention to chronic sick and maternity services. The staff consists of four visiting women and occasionally a resident home help is sent in special cases.
  - (c) Infectious Diseases.  
No provision.
2. Midwives.  
None employed or subsidised by the Local Authority. Number practising in the area - 6.
3. Arrangements for the carrying out of Pathological and Bacteriological Investigations, Analysis of Foodstuffs etc., are made at the Somerset County Laboratory.
4. Hospitals.  
There are no hospitals of any description within the area. Hospital accommodation for Infectious Diseases - No change.
5. Maternity and Nursing Homes.  
No action has been taken under the Nursing Home Act of 1927.
6. Cases of Maternal Mortality and Puerperal Pyrexia are investigated by the County Authority.
7. Institutional Provisions for the case of Mental Defectives - None in the area.
8. Diphtheria Immunisations and Vaccinations procedure administered by the County Council and carried out at a clinic or by the local doctors at their surgeries.



SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. Water Supply.

To date nine of the largest villages have a main supply. Samples were taken by the Sanitary Inspector in various parishes during the year and the results of those are set out in his report.

2. Drainage.

Dulverton, Brushford and Exford have modern sewage works.

Winsford and Brompton Regis will be sewercd as soon as circumstances permit.

3. Rivers and Streams Pollution.

No action was considered necessary.

4. Closet Accommodation.

Improvements in the scattered cottages are constantly being made and every encouragement is given to do this. Many new septic tanks have been installed during the year.

5. Schools.

Brompton Regis, Dulverton, Exford, Withypool, Winsford and Brushford are the only schools having flush lavatories. Exton however, has a piped water supply. There is still room for improvement in the sanitary arrangements to the remainder.

6. Public Cleansing.

See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

7. Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

8. Eradication of Bedbugs.

No action has been required up to the present.

TUBERCULOSIS

New cases during 1955.

Mortality

Age Periods.	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	N.	F.
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
40	-	--	-	-	-	-	-	-
55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
70	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	1

Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1952 - No action.  
Public Health Act, 1925, (Section 62). No action taken.

My thanks are due to Mr. Jewell for his assistance in compiling this Report and also for his co-operation throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE NICHOLSON, M.O.H.



1955

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

To the Chairman and Members of the Dulverton Rural District Council :-

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Report from the 1st January to the 31st December 1955 (inclusive), in accordance with Article 19 (12) of the Sanitary Officers Order, 1935.

The Council have over 200 houses, the upkeep of which by direct labour is the responsibility of this department. The issue of stores for this work, together with the continual supervision required, take up a good deal of your officers' time.

Since work on sewerage and sewage disposal, water supplies and distribution is dealt with similarly it is becoming increasingly difficult to do all that is required with a staff of 7 workmen, especially over such a scattered district of 79000 acres. The work of refuse collection, which covers the whole area is by no means an easy one. Collections are made at regular intervals, according to the needs of the villages and the refuse disposed of at the Council's incinerator at Dulverton. The amount collected tends to increase, mainly on account of the use of tinned and packet foods. All tins are sorted and baled in an electrically operated press, then sold as salvage. Here again, refuse collection and disposal is by direct labour with the Council's own Refuse vehicle. Three men are employed full time in this work which also includes attention to the main sewage works at Dulverton.

During the year a complete survey was made of houses in the district but the results of these will not be available until 1956.

The foregoing is only part of the many and varied duties carried out. My Staff comprise a qualified Assistant Sanitary Inspector and a clerk.

NUISANCES AND COMPLAINTS

Defective Cess Pits .....	5
Offensive Accumulations.....	10
Fouled Watercourses.....	1
Dirty Premises.....	4
Bad or suspected Water Supply.....	18
Overcrowding.....	2
Animals kept in unfit premises.....	7
Defective Sanitary Conveniences.....	6
Housing Complaints.....	71
Miscellaneous.....	43
Sewage and Drainage.....	40
<b>TOTAL....</b>	<b>207</b>

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES

Meat

From the 1st July, 1954 slaughtering commenced locally and two slaughterhouses were licensed for a period of three years as an interim measure, but I am of the opinion other arrangements should be made before the expiration of this period as the present facilities are very much below the standard that will be required. Regular inspections are made.

RECORD OF INSPECTIONS

Routine visits .....	206
Occasional slaughtering .....	9

MEAT UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

	Whole carcases.	Fore qrs.	Hind qrs.	Head.	Liver.	Lungs.	Heart.	Spleen
Bovines.	-	-	1	-	5	-	-	-
Calves.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sheep.	-	-	1	4	-	-	-	-
Pigs.	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-
	-	-	3	4	7	-	-	-



### MILK AND DAIRIES

The inspection of cowsheds and dairies is now the responsibility of the County Agricultural Executive Committee. Under grant aided schemes water supplies are being improved at a reasonable rate. The Local Authority are, however, required to see that their byelaws are complied with in all new building work connected with cowstalls etc., and are always ready to give any advice in this connection.

### WATER SUPPLY

All main water schemes under the control of the Council are visited at least once a week. All the larger villages now have a piped water supply. There is an automatic hardening plant at Hollam, Dulverton, which treats all water used in Dulverton, Brushford and supplies to the North Devon Water Board for over the border needs. The water is raised in P.H. value from 6.4 to 9.0. During the year, which has been exceptionally dry, springs reached a very low level. It was not, however, necessary to ration water or curtail the normal 24 hours supply except in two small communities for a short period.

### SCAVENGING

The Council make regular collections of house refuse throughout the District, all of which is taken to a central incinerator at Dulverton for disposal.

### HOUSING

The rate of progress on new housing has been satisfactory. To date 127 post-war local authority houses have been completed in Dulverton and outlying villages. The average price per dwelling for local authority houses was £1400.

### SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND DRAINAGE

Main works are at Dulverton, Brushford and Exford and it is hoped at some future date to submit schemes for Winsford, Withypool and Brompton Regis. Works are regularly attended to and kept in good order.

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES

At the request of the Medical Officer of Health, enquiries into all cases of Infectious Diseases were at once carried out.

Number of premises visited.....	9
Number of rooms disinfected.....	6

### PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.

The Council employ a full-time Inspector-Operator. Every farm in the District is inspected at regular intervals and it is found this procedure tends to keep the obligations of the occupier under the Act well to the fore. Without frequent servicing the objects of the Act would be defeated and everything is done by this Authority to see this is carried out.

Although not required by the Act to service agricultural land and buildings, the Council nevertheless have undertaken to do so on a limited scale.

Payment is made to the Council for this service of a sum to cover working expenses and travelling. Dwelling houses are serviced free of charge.



SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS FOR THE YEAR

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Housing Inspections .....	1170
Housing re-inspections .....	187
Inspection of Meat and other Foods .....	160
Factories and Workshops .....	7
Infectious Diseases .....	9
Visits in connection with Nuisances & Complaints ...	397
Visits in connection with Rats and Mice .....	1506
Miscellaneous Visits.....	47
Water Sampling .....	40
Water Supplies, Sewage Disposal etc., .....	220

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3743

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C O N C L U S I O N

I desire once again to express my thanks to the Chairman, Councillors and Medical Officer for their consideration and support given to me during the past year, also the Clerk and his staff for their co-operation in the work of this department.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Your obedient Servant,

HORACE A. JEWELL.

Surveyor and Inspector.

Dulverton,  
Somerset.

January, 1956.

